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The USAID - Internews + NewsGuard Corruption + The Conspiracy To Eliminate Independent Media

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NaturalNews.com | Lance D Johnson

• Former State Department official Mike Benz revealed on Joe Rogan's podcast how USAID funded a global propaganda network targeting independent media outlets.

• USAID allegedly pressured advertisers to blacklist U.S.-based independent news sites, including ZeroHedge and The Federalist, as part of a broader campaign to suppress dissent.

• The agency's actions echo historical abuses of power, such as the CIA's targeting of anti-Vietnam War activists in the 1960s and 1970s.

• Benz detailed how USAID's operations are intertwined with organizations like Internews and the OCCRP, which have received significant funding from the U.S. government.

• The revelations raise questions about the erosion of free speech and the weaponization of taxpayer-funded agencies for political purposes.

The USAID - Internews corruption and the conspiracy to eliminate independent media

In a bombshell three-hour interview on The Joe Rogan Experience, former State Department official Mike Benz pulled back the curtain on the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), exposing what he described as a sprawling, unaccountable propaganda machine designed to silence independent media and manipulate public opinion.

The revelations, which Benz called "a peek into the machine," paint a disturbing picture of how a taxpayer-funded agency allegedly colluded with corporations, NGOs, and foreign governments to blacklist U.S.-based news outlets and suppress dissenting voices. The implications are staggering: a U.S. government agency, ostensibly tasked with promoting democracy abroad, has been weaponized to undermine free speech at home.

The interview comes on the heels of Elon Musk's team at DOGE uncovering evidence of USAID's alleged misuse of funds and power. Benz, who has spent years exposing what

he calls the “deep state’s global propaganda complex,” described USAID as a “rogue blob” operating with little oversight. “This is top-down U.S. government policy from the White House,” Benz said, his voice dripping with disdain. “It’s not just *Internews* going rogue. This is systematic.”

At the heart of Benz’s revelations is USAID’s alleged role in orchestrating advertiser boycotts against independent media outlets. Benz explained how USAID-funded organizations like *Internews* pressured corporations and governments to blacklist news sites that operated on social media platforms. “This is the basis of lawsuits here in the U.S., like *The Daily Wire* and *The Federalist* suing the State Department,” Benz said. “U.S. news sites are on these advertiser blacklists.”

The campaign, Benz argued, was not an isolated incident but part of a broader strategy to control the flow of information. “This is not a half-a-billion-dollar grantee of USAID going rogue and being ideological about this,” he said. “This is deliberate policy.” The goal, according to Benz, is to economically cripple independent outlets by stripping them of ad revenue, effectively silencing voices that challenge the mainstream narrative.

A history of abuse: from Vietnam to Ukraine

Benz drew parallels between USAID’s current operations and the CIA’s historical abuses of power. “This happened against the left, against the Democrats in the 1960s and 70s when the CIA and its sister orgs like USAID were pumping money into domestic politics to stop the anti-Vietnam War movement,” he said. The comparison is chilling: a government agency, ostensibly created to promote democracy, weaponized to suppress dissent.

The conversation then turned to Ukraine, where USAID’s influence has been particularly pronounced. Benz detailed how then-Vice President Joe Biden allegedly used USAID to pressure Ukraine into firing prosecutor Viktor Shokin, who was investigating Burisma, the energy company where Biden’s son, Hunter, served on the board. “Joe Biden personally weaponized USAID in order to force a foreign country’s prosecutor to be fired,” Benz said. The revelations add fuel to long-standing allegations of corruption and cronyism surrounding the Biden family’s dealings in Ukraine.

The global propaganda network: NGOs, hacked documents, and hit pieces

Benz also shed light on USAID's ties to organizations like the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), which he described as a "consortium of investigative journalists" funded by the U.S. government. "Half of its funding comes from USAID and the U.S. State Department," Benz said. "They have a veto right over the staff that it can hire." The OCCRP, which broke the Panama Papers, has been accused of targeting USAID's political opponents under the guise of investigative journalism.

The implications are deeply troubling. "This is the largest consortium of investigative journalists on planet Earth," Benz said. "And they're being sponsored by the group that's connected to something with hacking power." The suggestion is clear: USAID and its partners are not just funding journalism—they're orchestrating it.

Benz traced the roots of USAID's current operations back to the post-World War II era, when the U.S. government reoriented its approach to global power. "In 1948, we completely reoriented the structure of the American Empire," he said. "We moved from primarily kinetic warfare into what George Kennan called organized political warfare." The result, Benz argued, was a system of plausible deniability that allowed agencies like USAID to operate in the shadows, free from public scrutiny.

The consequences of this system are now coming to light. "What people are going to see on this is going to completely reorient their mental map of how they think the world works," Benz said. "How they think American power projects into the institutions."

The revelations about USAID's alleged misuse of power are more than just a scandal—they are a betrayal of the public trust. A government agency, funded by taxpayers and tasked with promoting democracy, has been exposed as a tool of censorship and propaganda.

As Benz put it, "This is not just about USAID. This is about how every major institution in America—from media to universities, unions, NGOs, and even public health—has been instrumentalized by this system." The question now is whether the American

people will hold their government accountable or allow this betrayal to go unchallenged.

Sources:

Zerohedge.com

Youtube.com

X.com

Microsoft Drops USAID-Funded NewsGuard After Ted Cruz Starts Digging

ZeroHedge News | Tyler Durden | ZeroHedge.com

Microsoft Drops USAID-Funded NewsGuard After Ted Cruz Starts Digging

Microsoft has dropped NewsGuard, a left-wing fact checking organization they partnered with that has helped the advertising industry justify **blacklists for independent conservative media sites** such as ZeroHedge. [and Truth11.com]

The move came after Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) began investigating Microsoft for funding the online "media literacy" censorship tool created by NewsGuard to help guide "learners of all ages through the overwhelming landscape of online news and information."

Now we come to find out that NewsGuard was funded by USAID...

> In July of 2024, @SarahEKomar wrote a hit piece on me for @NewsGuardRating
>
> In January of 2025 we learned that NewsGuard received nearly 3 quarter million

> dollars from the DOD courtesy of USAID.
>
> Receipts below. pic.twitter.com/CRjPgWuFvi— Tim Sharp 🍊 🍊 us (@realtimsharp) February 5, 2025

In response to Cruz, **Microsoft claims their support of NewsGuard was limited to a one-time donation in 2018**, and said it had asked NewsGuard to remove a claim on its website that read "NewsGuard's Media Literacy Programs are made possible thanks to generous support from Microsoft," *Newsmax*reports, citing a Senate Commerce Committee spokesperson.

> The co-founder of this "anti-disinformation" organization participated in the greatest act of disinformation in the 2020 election -- the false claim that the Hunter Biden story was a Russian hoax.
>
> So did NewsGuard's deep state advisor, Michael Hayden..https://t.co/m1Ln9frUKs— Allum Bokhari (@AllumBokhari) February 3, 2025

NewsGuard has since removed any mention of Microsoft from their website.

"Big Tech is finally beginning to recognize the censorship of conservative viewpoints will no longer be tolerated by the American people," Cruz, chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, said in a statement to Newsmax on Thursday.

"**I am happy to see that the leadership at Microsoft has renounced their support of NewsGuard's so-called media literacy tool in response to my letter.**

"NewsGuard's biased rating system stifles intellectual diversity, hinders critical thinking among young students, and undermines our nation's core values of free expression."

In his letter to Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, Cruz pointed out that **NewsGuard has targeted outlets such as The Federalist, The Daily Wire, and NewsMax**, branding them as "unreliable," while left-wing outlets such as Jacobin, The Atlantic, and The New Republic are deemed reliable.

NewsGuard has also "found a willing partner in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT)" to use their "media literacy" tool browser extension used by over 800 public libraries worldwide.

> *In November, Federal Communications Commission Commissioner Brendan Carr, now chairman, wrote to the CEOs of Apple, Meta, Microsoft, and Alphabet demanding that they fess up about their censorship activities targeting conservatives.*
>
> *Carr specifically identified NewsGuard, which exists to "censor free speech and conservative news outlets." -Newsmax*

Major advertising agencies have used NewsGuard to censor conservative media - including Omnicom, Interpublic, Publicis, Magnite, PubMatic, TripleLift, Comscore, Zefr, and Giphy.

Original Article: https://www.zerohedge.com/markets/microsoft-drops-usaid-funded-newsguard-after-ted-cruz-starts-digging

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